



**Brighton & Hove  
City Council**

# Housing Management Panel

Title:	<b>Housing Management Panel: East Area</b>
Date:	<b>25 January 2016</b>
Time:	<b>7.00pm</b>
Venue	<b>Bristol Estate Community Hall</b>
Members:	<b>Councillors:</b> Mears (Chair); <b>Ward Councillors for the Area, Delegates of Tenants Association in the area.</b>
Contact:	<b>Greg Weaver</b> Democratic Services Assistant 01273 291214 greg.weaver@brighton-hove.gov.uk



**AGENDA**

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<b>30 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING</b>	<b>1 - 6</b>
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<b>31 CHAIR'S COMMUNICATIONS</b>	
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Responses to items raised at the Tenant Only Meeting held on 8 December 2015 (copy attached as 'blue pages').	
<b>33 DRAFT ASSET MANAGEMENT STRATEGY</b>	<b>13 - 38</b>
<b>34 QUARTER 3 PERFORMANCE REPORT</b>	<b>39 - 40</b>
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To <u>note</u> the minutes and reports of the following Committees and City Wide groups (copies attached):	
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**BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL**  
**HOUSING MANAGEMENT PANEL: EAST AREA**

**7.00pm 30 NOVEMBER 2015**

**CRAVEN VALE COMMUNITY HALL, THE VALE, 17A HADLOW CRESCENT,  
BRIGHTON, BN2 0FH**

**MINUTES**

**Present:**

**Representatives:** Alan Cooke (Craven Vale), Irene Voice (South hawk), Janet Gearing (Woodingdean)

**Non-Voting Delegates:** Mary Whitner (Secretary South Hawk)

**Officers:** Tracey John (Head of Housing), Becky Purnell (Resident Involvement Manager), Sharon Terry (Resident Involvement Management), Nick Kitson (Project Officer), Ododo Dafe ( Head of Income Involvement Improvement), Delia Hills (Mears), Gregory Weaver (Democratic Services Assistant)

**18 APOLOGIES**

18.1 Apologies were received from Councillor Mary Mears, Chris El-Shabba and Ian Ramage.

**19 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

19.1 In reference to 12.5, Resident Involvement Manager, Becky Purnell stated Councillor Gill Mitchell is working with the association to try and resolve traffic issues.

19.2 In reference to 12.64 the Chair asked for the asbestos report services carried out to be added to the maintenance report.

**20 CHAIR'S COMMUNICATIONS**

20.1 Tracey John, Head of Housing, gave a brief introduction of her role within the Council and stated what rents can be charged, how rents worked previously and how it has changed. She stated it is due to change again by Central Government.

20.2 Ododo Dafe, Head of Income Involvement and Improvement, stated the new developments taking place in Brighton.

## **21 RESIDENTS QUESTION TIME**

21.1 (Item 1 – Major Improvement Works)

21.2 Becky Purnell clarified the survey to be undertaken.

21.2 Janet Gearing stated that a more comprehensive study is required.

21.3 Sharon Terry confirmed she will feedback the request from the panel that examinations of residences should include rear windows and from inside the properties to the team.

21.4 Janet Gearing enquired as to why a Brighton firm has not been awarded a contract to replace windows, she proposed a Woodingdean estate firm that offered a discount.

21.5 Ododo Dafe stated that BHCC cannot use a local company as part of the tendering process, previously companies were able to put in a bid for work however as BHCC spent a lot of money on contracts assurance around liability, insurance etc had to be taken in to account. As a result companies may not bid for work as it is too substantial, she also noted that as long as companies are able to do the work it may be possible for them to partner with the contracted firms. She also reaffirmed that there were a lot of bidding circumstances to consider.

21.6 (Item 2 – Grass Cuttings)

21.7 Alan Cooke was happy for the accurate response however issued concern over the poor performance. He noted that as a leaseholder he was only receiving 60% of what is being paid for. In reference to point D, he enquired how residents would be expected to dispose of garden waste.

21.8 Janet Gearing stated that residents need somewhere to remove garden waste, she also noted that in previous meetings possible options such as vans with a mesh to collect waste were discussed.

21.9 Ododo Dafe stated that some queries are meant for other departments and emphasised the concentration of concern on tenancy and housing primarily at Housing Management Area Panels.

21.10 Becky Purnell stated the blue page response contains a general number and suggested taking it to the tenant only meeting. She noted that as we are on a chalk base

21.11 (Item 3 Parking Issues)

21.12 Alan Cooke stated that all responses received were excellent, although he may not agree with them, he was grateful they were taken seriously.

21.13 Panel was satisfied with responses.

## **22 QUARTER 2 PERFORMANCE REPORT**

22.1 Ododo Dafe gave a brief overview and presented the report noting customer satisfaction in terms of survey response is very good. She stated that there was an issue regarding internal referred calls creating issues as calls are bound out, as a result the figures will look different next quarter.

22.2 **RESOLVED** – That the report be noted.

## **23 MUTUAL EXCHANGE INCENTIVE SCHEME PROPOSAL**

23.1 Nick Kitson presented the report stating that other Council's such as Harlow and Cambridge have been cross referenced and found that there were positives such as financial benefits and a quick changeover if agreed by committee. He noted that money was set aside this financial year and that it is already available.

23.2 Janet Gearing asked if an applicant would be allowed if their rent was in arrears.

23.3 Nick Kitson stated this is a considered on a case by case basis.

23.4 Janet Gearing stated all financial positives must be highlighted to promote this scheme.

23.5 Nick Kitson agreed with the statement and noted positivity in previous cases.

23.6 Alan Cooke enquired if mutual exchange can be outside of the city as well.

23.7 Nick Kitson stated that it can apply to people leaving as long as it is a Council tenant receiving money.

23.8 Mary Whitner enquired if there was a limited amount of smaller spaces available.

23.9 Nick Kitson stated this was correct, he noted that far more people want small spaces.

23.10 **RESOLVED** – That the report be noted.

## **24 WELFARE REFORM CHANGES**

24.1 Ododo Dafe presented the report on Welfare Reform Changes stating that universal credit will be introduced next month and that it is likely to initially have a significant impact on a small number of people. She noted that Universal credit will now only be available to people over 21.

- 24.2 Janet Gearing stated they are only providing a specific amount and enquired how much extra will be required.
- 24.3 Ododo Dafe stated supply and demand are one of many reasons for rent prices. She clarified that if capped families have to pay certain bills, they will need to offset the payment from somewhere else. She noted this was a bid to promote people in to a job and to find work. She clarified that whilst only available to single persons in its infancy, other groups will be introduced later on. She emphasised that people will be encouraged to practice budgeting.
- 24.4 Janet Gearing warned of incoming issues regarding the 6 week wait for people.
- 24.5 Ododo Dafe clarified that the process currently followed is more complicated as all rent is due on a Monday and in advance. With universal credit it will be on an individual date per person; BHCC will spend more money chasing rent payments from tenants.
- 24.6 Janet Gearing enquired if BHCC has to help homeless people.
- 24.7 Ododo Dafe stated that BHCC does have to offer some assistance although not housing, there is a discretionary fund for people in stress. She noted that this fund will become overly requested soon and warned of a possible vicious circle of decisions having to be made such as food/fuel and eat/heat which may contribute to physical and psychological health concerns.
- 24.8 Mary Whitner enquired if the aforementioned changes apply to pensioners.
- 24.9 Ododo Dafe confirmed that pensioners will not be affected.
- 24.10 Nick Kitson stated that people who currently receive tax credit won't see a large drop, he noted that it is to be more of a delay rather than a drop. He clarified that 3 million people will experience loss later on once universal credit is adopted. He noted that Brighton is the last place to experience this in the country.
- 24.11 Janet Gearing enquired if universal credit will available to those on low wages supplemented with working tax credit.
- 24.12 Ododo Dafe confirmed this would happen.
- 24.13 **RESOLVED** – that the report be noted.

## **25 MODEL CONSTITUTION**

- 25.1 Becky Purnell presented the report which concluded with a request to amend the model constitution by way of revising the lexicon to fully adhere to the equalities act.
- 25.2 Members agreed to this request.



**26 REVIEW OF CODE OF CONDUCT**

- 26.1 Becky Purnell enquired if area panels would like someone elected or volunteered to meet with herself and other representative from other area panels to discuss and create a report for the June Area Panel.
- 26.2 Alan Cooke expressed interest in the use of the constitution to remedy issues in the past, he stated this promoted politeness and added by way of example, that East Area have had people sign a form at the local foodbank in past to promote good conduct.
- 26.3 **RESOLVED** – that the report is noted.

**27 CITY WIDE REPORTS**

- 27.1 **AGREED** – to note the report.

**28 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

- 28.1 Alan Cooke enquired who is responsible for providing bus shelters as people on the estate have requested another.
- 28.2 Sharon Terry stated she will try and find out.

The meeting concluded at 8:30pm

Signed

Chair

Dated this

day of



**Items from Tenants Only Meeting held on Tuesday, 8 December 2015**

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**1. Major Improvement Works**

*The meeting felt that the written response on the Blue pages received from the Property and Investment team on 30 November represented some progress on the issue of planned works in Woodingdean. They noted that an 'outline draft capital investment programme' for Woodingdean will be presented in 5 months' time (from 30th November 2015) which will cover external elements such as windows, doors external repairs & decorations, communal decorations and roofs.*

**Action:** *It was agreed that a progress report on this be requested at the next East Area Panel Meeting on 25 January 2016*

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**Response from Perrin Horne, Partnership & Resident Liaison Manager,  
Tel:- 01273 293427.**

The Property & Investment Team's Asset Manager, John Currell has commissioned and requested that surveys be undertaken regarding the condition of properties in Woodingdean. These surveys are yet to be completed and submitted. There is no report to share with residents as yet.

We hope to be able to update you at the next Area Panel meeting within the five month period stated.

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## **2. Reduced Grass Cutting Service**

*The blue pages response to the Area Panel meeting on 30th November, stated:*

*“City Parks aim to carry out 10 cuts from March to November. Only six were carried out due to two members of staff leaving and not being replaced”. City Parks are saving money by not filling vacant posts and the meeting felt that these savings should be passed on to Housing and, in turn, Housing should reimburse leaseholders.*

**Action:** *It was agreed that this should be raised at the Area Panel Meeting on 25th January with consideration being given, by Housing, to requesting a refund from City Parks and using some of that money to reimburse leaseholders.*

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**Response from Robert Keelan, Neighbourhood Manager,  
Tel:- 01273 293030.**

Gardening in the city largely happens in two ways.

1. ‘Housing’ estate related gardening which is paid by a service charge for the tenants who live there and also
2. ‘City’ gardening which is paid by council tax.

The CityParks team carry out both.

An estate can have both ‘Housing’ and ‘City’ gardening around it. If anyone wants to see which geographical area comes under which contract, this can be found on an online map via [www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/content/grounds-maintenance-map](http://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/content/grounds-maintenance-map).

If anyone would like a copy of their area map they can contact the Housing Customer Service team on 01273 293030.

The map highlights service charge (Housing) gardening so by default, if it is not on the map it is ‘City’ council tax funded gardening.

Gardening immediately around council homes will largely be ‘*Housing*’ i.e. service charge funded grounds maintenance but there may be ‘*City*’ council tax funded gardening e.g. on road verges around an estate.

The complaint suggests there is a ‘*Housing*’ problem with the grass cutting but I need to make the distinction. In short, residents sometimes think that the service charge they pay covers an area that it doesn’t.

So, where are we? It’s been a busy year for Cityparks this year facing not only challenges in the weather but also changes to their ‘*City*’ gardening contracts that have brought reduced budgets, work pressures and staff cuts. As the ‘*Housing*’ grounds maintenance contract is funded from service charges, this contract should

have continued as normal and the 'Housing' grounds maintenance shouldn't have been effected. There have however been occasions where the service has slipped while the team re-adjusts. One of these areas was the grass cutting at Craven Vale which as per the last area panel report dropped from ten to six over the last year.

The contract with Cityparks regarding grass cutting is as follows:

- *Height of cut 25mm, with a maximum height of grass 80mm. Machine Rotary, cylinder mower or strimmer can be used. Provided that no more than two weeks on housing sites has elapsed between cuts, the Council will accept grass growth, which exceeds that specified.*
- *Cut Banks over 30 degree slope the following shall apply: Height of cut 50mm, Maximum height of grass 100mm.*
- *This equates to 10 Cuts per year from March to November on a 3 weekly cycle*
- *When grass is cut it will be left in situ and will not be collected*
- *All grass edges adjacent to borders and channels will be trimmed using sharp long-handled shears and no other method (e.g. strimmers) each time the lawn or edges are mown. Edges shall also be cut at the same time flowerbeds and planted areas are cultivated if this does not coincide with mowing times. Trimmings shall be collected on every occasion when edging is carried out.*

We have a situation that the grass has been left to grow and Cityparks have cut the grass less often than they should. This isn't what we want for our estates and Cityparks know this needs remedying. There is an argument that as the grass was longer this would have taken longer to mow on each visit. This holds some weight but isn't a situation that anyone desires.

A tenant in a Craven Road flat typically pays 99p per week as a gardening service charge. It is not our current thinking to separate out the cost of the missing grass cuts. The gardening contract is a partnership where we ask Cityparks to respond flexibly to special requests from the housing team and we occasionally accept that there may be a knock on somewhere else. Generally, where Cityparks fail to meet the gardening standard though and complaints are received or poor standards noticed on inspections, the local Neighbourhoods Team Leader will meet with the Cityparks Manager to remedy.

A message in this enquiry is that the gardening service needs to be monitored more closely and I will raise this with the Neighbourhood Team Leaders. The Neighbourhood & Community Service Improvement Group have recently been exploring how we can publicise to residents what to expect for their gardening service charges. This may be in the form of information in the foyer of flats and will bring transparency so that residents know what to expect from the Cityparks contract.

I am sorry that we the residents of Craven Vale received less grass cutting that they should have done. The message has been received and increased checking and interventions will result to ensure the situation isn't repeated.

### **3. Gardening and decoration for over 70s**

*There was concern that the withdrawal of the paper application process would exclude many people from accessing this service, and they would probably be those who are most isolated and need it the most.*

*The process for registering is also very cumbersome. The list for this year has been closed, so if anyone applies they are told that they have been put on a waiting list, but that they still have to apply again in April 2016.*

**Action:** *It was agreed that this should be raised at the next East Area Panel Meeting on 25 January 2016.*

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#### **Response from Michelle Baden, Senior Housing Services Advisor, Tel:- 01273 293030.**

Following the review of the Decorating and Gardening Schemes all applications received where criteria was met were accepted and the work is either completed or is currently in progress.

Housing Customer Services conducted a survey three months into the financial year and the responses were overwhelmingly in favour of the new scheme. While papers applications are no longer used (as outlined in the Area Panel report last year) tenants can still access the scheme by telephone. The Housing Customer Service staff complete the application over the phone on their behalf making the process much less cumbersome.

On occasion applicants were placed on a waiting list to ensure the budget was still available as jobs are priced individually and the exact costs are unclear until the job is completed. This enables us to meet customer expectations and not to promise anything the budget cannot deliver. As already stated all applications that met the criteria have been accepted this year. The 2016 / 2017 schemes will be open from mid-February.

If any tenant representatives are aware of any tenants who feel excluded and are in need, please by all means do contact the Housing Customer Service Team. You can call 01273 293022, or email [Housing.CustomerServices@brighton-hove.gov.uk](mailto:Housing.CustomerServices@brighton-hove.gov.uk)

#### **4. Park rangers**

*Brighton and Hove City Council budget proposals include a proposed cut of Park Rangers from 9 to 3 staff.*

*There are over 40 'friends of' groups in the city and it will not be possible for Park Rangers to carry out their regular duties and support these groups. This may cause groups to close and prevent them from being effective. People will not have the advice and support they need when they are volunteering to do clear ups and improve local areas.*

**Action:** *It was agreed that this should be raised at the next East Area Panel Meeting on 25 January*

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**Response from Becky Purnell, Resident Involvement Manager,  
Tel:- 01273 294349.**

I have passed this information onto Robert Walker, the City Parks Operations Manager, who has said the budget proposal is "to retain service and review to reduce service provision from non-statutory functions and to concentrate purely on volunteering, engagement and public rights of way work".

The purpose of Area Panels is to 'consider reports relating to the council's role as landlord...' and the Blue Pages are intended to provide residents to ask questions that fall within this remit.

Please can you talk directly with the service responsible for the issue you are raising and to pass information on more quickly than holding onto them until Area Panel meetings? Please do let me know if you would like the contact details of any department?

Information regarding Brighton & Hove City Councils budget can be found on the council web site at <http://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/content/council-and-democracy/council-finance/current-council-budget>.





Housing Asset Management Strategy  
2016-2020 FINAL DRAFT (v2.7)

*Investing in safe, well  
managed homes for  
all our residents*



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## Executive Summary

The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Asset Management Strategy is the key to ensuring that we align our assets with the current and future needs of residents. As such, it aligns directly with the City's Housing Strategy 2015, which was developed in collaboration, and sets out the detailed housing challenges affecting the City. It has 3 key priorities: improving Housing Supply, Improving Housing Quality and Improving Housing Support.

This new Asset Management Strategy acknowledges that there are a number of challenges in meeting these priorities, such as rental, welfare and housing policy reforms, demographic changes, changing customer expectations, the constraint of the borrowing cap, and ensuring we utilise assets in the most effective way. By consulting, and continually working closely with our customers, staff and other key stakeholders, the aim is to strike the optimum balance between investing in existing stock and creating new homes.

This strategy places residents of Brighton & Hove, and our staff, at its heart. The key priority objectives of the Asset Management Strategy are:

- **Investing in Homes and neighbourhoods to provide safe, good quality housing and support services**
- **Supporting new housing supply**
- **Ensuring financial viability within the Tenancy Strategy**

All of these priorities are underpinned by, and will continuously support, our agreed Tenancy Strategy Commitments.

Effective asset management means that homes and services will be based on affordability and will be able to adapt to changing circumstances. We aim to provide stability for residents to live successful, independent lives. It will also ensure we have the right mix of homes and other assets in the future by setting out stock viability criteria and decisions.

The Asset Management Strategy spans a 4-year period, but will be delivered via a more detailed, and annually reviewed, Asset Plan, which will set out asset information, action plans, targets and monitoring arrangements in more detail.

This is an ambitious strategy, which will entail us doing things differently sometimes, but it is based on extensive research, consultation and robust financial business planning.

## Our Vision

This strategy is for everyone living in the city as housing has a fundamental effect on our lives whether we are living in social housing or not. Our vision is that:

***Everything we do aims to help Brighton & Hove to be an inclusive city with affordable, high quality, housing that supports a thriving economy by offering security, promoting health and wellbeing and reduces its impact on the environment. We want to help bring about integrated communities in a society that values everyone to recognise and tackle the inequality faced by families, the poor and the vulnerable.***

We have listened to local people and our residents to identify the housing needs that matter most and set out our priorities for action that will make a real difference to their lives and have a positive impact on the city. Our strategy also supports the council's priorities where housing impacts on their success, particularly in helping to alleviate the pressure on social care and health services arising from an expanding older population.

The council's Values of Respect, Customer Focus, Openness, Creativity, Efficiency and Collaboration underpin the work we do by going beyond the traditional bricks and mortar focus of housing to deliver real change focussed on the needs of individuals and communities.

## The Housing Challenges

It is estimated that an additional 17,400 affordable homes are needed by 2017 above that planned<sup>1</sup> however, limited subsidy and high land values are pushing up costs. This highlights the need to think differently and explore wider partnerships that can demonstrate viable business cases for development of the housing needed by residents.

Against this background the HRA is aiming to support various types and mixes of development on its land, to contribute to the aim of adding 500 homes to the city. This is a significant challenge and will require flexibility and innovation, as well as seeking new partnerships and ways of working. This aim has to be balanced against investment choices in existing homes. By maximising the use of our existing assets, and reviewing our cost base, through this strategy, we will be able to improve the options available whilst remaining financially stable.

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<sup>1</sup> Assessment of Affordable Housing Need Report 2012: [http://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/sites/brighton-hove.gov.uk/files/downloads/ldf/Assessment\\_of\\_Affordable\\_Housing\\_Need.pdf](http://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/sites/brighton-hove.gov.uk/files/downloads/ldf/Assessment_of_Affordable_Housing_Need.pdf)

## Our Achievements

Housing Quality has been improved through long-term investment commitments -100% of homes were brought up to the Government's Decent Homes Standards before the target of 31 December 2013. This work continues with an ongoing capital programme supporting investment in kitchens, bathrooms, windows, doors, roofs, re-wiring, efficient boilers, external repairs and decorations.

We have assisted residents in reducing their fuel use, and costs, through the installation of over 6,000 high efficiency condensing boilers and modern controls.

The estimated carbon emissions from homes we manage has fallen from 46,000 tonnes per annum in 2010 to around 30,000 tonnes in April 2015.

High rise major works refurbishments and thermal performance improvements, including successful projects at the Bristol Estate, Essex Place, Hereford Court & Warwick Mount

Consistently high levels of gas servicing compliance, this has been at 100% for the six months March-August 2015, for example.

New scheme to provide properties with level access showers through the letting process

Residents identified lifts as a priority for investment some years ago, and this supported the lift modernisation programme, now well underway, with improved access for residents

We now have in place a door entry system and new main entrance doors programme

Targeted extension and conversion scheme to make the most of existing assets and support families with mobility needs or overcrowding

100 apprenticeships provided through our partnership with Mears

Provided learning opportunities for residents through decorating workshops

Special training workshops given to Resident assessors for property inspections

New access procedure implemented

Working more closely with leaseholders giving specific financial advice and assistance to resident leaseholders

In 2014/15 we invested over £1 million adapting council homes, delivering 893 adaptations, 238 major adaptations and 655 minor adaptations.

### *Seniors Housing*

Enhancements to Senior Housing schemes including dementia-friendly painting schemes

Redesign of schemes with shared facilities so all properties now have their own bathrooms

Planned programme of modernising schemes to change studios into one bed flats

## **Consulting and working with our residents**

We listen to our residents, and involve them throughout procurement and delivery to make sure that the services we provide are scrutinised and improved to reflect changing needs and aspirations.

Residents have helped shape our asset management strategy from a very early stage through a series of discussion events with residents living in flats, houses, and leaseholders too. These were chaired by the Head of Housing, with the views of residents forming a key part of the strategic direction of future services and investment. For example, residents were particularly keen to prioritise investment in the exterior repair of buildings and common parts, such as decorations in stairwells and lighting, with the aim of achieving a more consistent standard across the city. This is now both being reflected and supported through the capital programme proposals.

Additionally, resident feedback was that generally the focus for investment should be mainly on improving the quality of the existing housing stock, and ensuring that all housing should be of a good standard, and well insulated, to help with fuel costs.

Residents are at the heart of our partnerships, and form part of the executive decision making Core Group that oversees the repairs partnership with Mears. Residents also fully participated in the procurement of the 10- year contract when it was tendered.

More details of the feedback from the consultation exercises are available on request.

## **Valuing our Staff**

We conduct our service delivery with integrity, to show respect and value our relationships with colleagues, residents and other stakeholders. To support this approach we invest in our teams, and recognise that the motivation, skills and knowledge of all our staff are crucial to delivering a high quality service.

All staff are supported and encouraged to seek professional qualifications and active personal development.

One of Housing's rising stars has been Nick Hibberd who came to work as a Housing Service Advisor at the housing office in Whitehawk in 1995. By 2006 he was a Housing Manager, and in 2012 he moved from being Head of Housing Management to Head of Regeneration and is now an Acting Executive Director.

# Priority 1 – Investing in Homes and neighbourhoods

## Housing Quality Investment Standards

### Brighton & Hove Property Standard

Our property standard was developed closely with residents in response to feedback that the government's Decent Homes Standard was very basic and that we should aim for an improved local standard. During late 2013 and early 2014 the Council reviewed the existing standard in consultation with stakeholders, with the aim of maintaining, and exceeding, where possible, the standard across all HRA rental dwellings over the next 5 years. The new Brighton & Hove Property Standard was implemented as of 1 April 2014 and has the following key aims:

- To maintain 100% achievement of properties meeting the government's Decent Homes Standard and our local Brighton & Hove Standard over the medium term (initially the next 5 years)
- To ensure that all homes are as suitable as practicable for the needs of its occupants, in line with council policy
- To continue working closely with residents to help increase levels of resident satisfaction with the quality of their home

A copy of the full standard is available at : <http://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/content/housing/council-housing/brighton-hove-standard>

### Our commitment to a high quality and affordable Repairs and Maintenance Service

Through efficient procurement, the partnership arrangements deliver a high quality responsive repairs and empty homes service that puts residents at the heart of its management and development.

Additionally, based on feedback from residents on their priorities, there is a long-term investment plan for the upgrading and modernisation of passenger lifts. This is already helping residents to be able to rely on their lift to be safe and in service when they need it. Again, following consultation with residents, extra resources have been identified to improve external repairs and decorations on properties, including shared areas. This will be funded by reducing resources and lengthening programmes in other areas of investment.

In order to continue to balance investment in existing assets with the need to provide additional homes, a review of the detailed investments that are deliverable will continue to be undertaken regularly alongside the development of a New Homes Plan and annual financial business planning arrangements. The New Homes Plan will be directly linked to this strategy alongside the Asset Plan.

## **Our Asset Management approach to support communities**

### **Our Assets**

We directly manage around 11,650 homes, and over 2,700 leasehold dwellings, along with car parks, garages, land, commercial property and related assets.

Our managed stock is mixed, including some 1,800 homes in high rise flats, and around 4,400 houses or bungalows.

The stock is ageing, with around 75% of homes constructed before 1970. There is a mixture of dwelling size, with 36% of homes being 1-bedroom or studio types, and a further 38% being 2-bedroom dwellings.

### **Ensuring health and safety for residents, visitors and staff**

We are committed to having robust arrangements in place to help ensure the health and safety of all of those using and visiting our assets, to a reasonable level. This is a key responsibility, and as such we ensure that the investment required is maintained and made available ahead of other investment decisions. This includes good practice procedures and resources to support the management of asbestos, fire risk, legionella, gas and electrical equipment, amongst others.

### **Asset Management Information**

Our approach to asset information aims at providing robust data to ensure that we:

- target Investment in existing homes effectively, based on need and improving quality
- are able to plan effectively to ensure investment is sustainable in the long-term

We set up an asset management database over a decade ago, and have since added details of works carried out, as well as undertaking many more surveys. Using a variety of input sources, and working closely with all our partners, we ensure that risks are managed effectively. We aim to survey an average of 10 per cent of homes each year from 2016.

### **Our commitment to improving energy efficiency, health & wellbeing**

Helping residents to live in well insulated, efficiently heated, healthy homes remains a key long-term commitment. Progress on achieving this has been consistently good, with national Standard Assessment Procedure (SAP) energy rating performance monitoring being used to benchmark these. Key investments that contribute to these include installing high efficiency boilers, new doors, windows, insulation and renewable energy where appropriate. We are continuing to plan future additional improvements, including identifying potential community & district heating schemes and sustainable delivery methods to ensure affordable warmth for our residents, alongside emission reductions. We are committed to working with all stakeholders to ensure any potentially technically viable schemes are maximised, including full engagement with local communities and potential heat sources.

### **Adapting homes to help enable residents to continue to enjoy them**

Home adaptations play a key role in enabling safe, healthy, independent living at home.

Timely housing adaptations can significantly improve people's quality of life, reduce health and social care costs, help to reduce risk of injury [e.g. from falls], enable faster hospital discharge, delay onset of admission to residential care and reduce care costs [e.g. for people with dementia]



## **Supporting long-term affordability**

### **Achieving value for money and social value**

The Partnership benefits go much further than just improved living standards. Our long-term investment in housing quality is now leading to savings in the cost of responsive repairs. In 2014/15 the total cost of repairs fell by 10%, saving £414,000 from this budget, which can now be used for future strategic investment in homes. The average repair value also fell to £92.00 against a target of £115.

We are committed to promoting enhanced social, environmental and economic values through the procurement and management of goods and services. Through long-term partnerships are delivering well in excess of 100 apprenticeships for local young people.

### **Reviewing assets to ensure long-term viability**

Ensuring financial viability is the key consideration when it is established that assets, or a group of assets, may be unsustainable in the long-term, either financially, or for other reasons. As such, regular reviews of stock viability, which include the use of financial and other criteria, take place. Where a form of non-viability is established, a range of options need to be considered. These will include the potential for alternative delivery models, such as joint ventures or partnerships or asset release, as appropriate, on a case-by-case basis. The HRA will seek to consult as early as possible with residents and other stakeholders. More details of stock which may fall into this category are included in the Asset Plan.

### **A vision for success**

We believe that successful tenancies help residents to achieve their aspirations. We will review the tenancies we provide for new lettings to ensure the best fit between peoples' housing costs and their changing financial and family circumstances. Our key principle is to ensure that homes and services continue to be a safety net and a springboard for success.

### **Freeholds**

The HRA currently manage several hundred blocks that are now 100% sold leasehold. As such these now have no direct link to delivering our key social housing aims, but still utilise our administration and inspection resources. Where a block is fully leasehold we will review the residual value, and, where appropriate, seek to implement the most effective financial option for the HRA, subject to any consultation. This policy seeks to both create a value for money financial solution, and allow more focus on our remaining managed homes.

### **Proactive adaptations**

Over the next four years we are aiming to reinforce early intervention and a preventative approach to adaptations to help reduce demand and expenditure on reactive adaptations. Our focus is to promote advice and support to tenants, develop the accessible housing register, and make the best use of adapted and accessible homes.

## Priority 2 – Supporting new housing supply

### New homes targets and current delivery

The council is committed to delivering the City Plan commitments for new affordable homes, in addition to the new supply delivered by our housing association partners.

Top priority in the Council's [Housing Strategy 2015](#) is improving housing supply in the city and includes commitments to:

- prioritise support for new housing development that delivers a housing mix the city needs with a particular emphasis on family, Affordable Rent and where feasible, Social Rented housing
- directly provide more council housing, such as by developing ourselves through our New Homes for Neighbourhoods programme
- use Right To Buy receipts and developer contributions to fund new housing
- maximise housing provided from best use of the Council's Housing Revenue Account (HRA) investment, land and buildings.

The "New Homes for Neighbourhoods" programme was launched in March 2013. Since then Housing Committee has approved the development of 209 new homes of which two homes have been completed and six schemes to deliver 77 new homes are currently on site, with a further 57 already having planning permission.

Further sites continue to be identified through an ongoing review of housing assets in order to supply more homes and improve the neighbourhoods. There are also opportunities to convert redundant spaces within existing blocks to supplement the building of new homes.

So far, the additional homes are being delivered on either unused 'infill' land or unpopular garage sites. Communities are always fully consulted before we apply for planning permission. Changes have been made to the architects' proposals as result of community feedback.

The next challenge is to provide additional homes on those estates or parts of estates which are becoming unviable to maintain, or have wider design or related issues which point to them coming towards the end of the practical life. Our focus for regeneration will be on these parts of the stock, with the aim of regeneration to not only improve the built environment and provide additional homes, but also improve the training and employment opportunities of people who live there. These will be challenging times for the council and its communities as we consider phased demolition and re-building of blocks, and the tenure mix achievable. Council staff will ensure that residents are involved throughout the process, and supported sensitively, as well as given choices about where they live in future.

## **A strategic approach to delivery**

We plan to maximise delivery of new homes within the HRA borrowing cap limits, whilst supporting wider delivery projects where it makes sense to do so. This will only be possible through a variety of approaches, including establishing new and innovative partnerships, and multi-tenure supply.

We aim to build homes based on local housing need and maximise affordability. Our principle for supporting new supply is that each new housing scheme must be internally financially viable over the agreed financial planning period. To achieve this, the programme will consider, where agreed, a range of tenure types.

All new homes will be based on our core principles of delivering good quality, adaptable, long-life dwellings which are well designed and require low maintenance within a positive community context.

The details of how homes will be delivered will be set out in a New Homes Plan to be set out in partnership with the City Councils' Regeneration Team, and other stakeholders.

## **Using empty assets to provide housing**

There may be occasions when a managed decant of blocks will be required. To help ensure that these continue to be utilised positively to meet housing need, empty properties may be utilised to provide temporary housing, or similar, solutions whilst regeneration is progressed.

## **Reviewing empty or underused commercial assets**

These will be comprehensively reviewed to ensure they are contributing positively to the 3 priorities set out in the strategy. All options will be considered, and the sites to be initially looked at in detail are set out overleaf. Commercial assets can also assist in regenerating areas, and provide business rate income to the City. Area-based programmes will consider investment in these assets, and identify opportunities for growth.

## **Identifying communities we will work with further**

Through various stock analysis approaches, including financial viability, strategic analysis, housing quality, local improvement opportunities, and other indices, some parts of the stock may require a further consultative review. Where this is needed we are committed to working alongside local communities, to discuss and agree the best long-term plans for supporting a sustainable future. Reviews will consider all options and opportunities, including the potential for re-investment in the existing homes, where appropriate.

## Priority 3 – Ensuring secure financial foundations

### HRA MEDIUM TERM & 30 YEAR FINANCIAL FORECAST

The introduction of self financing in 2012 provided additional resources from the retention of all rental income and, through greater control locally, enabled longer term planning to improve the management and maintenance of council homes.

The medium term and 30 year forecast is provided in the Appendix along with the business planning assumptions used for income and expenditure.

Essentially although the financial plan shows that the HRA has healthy financial indicators to borrow to source funding for regeneration and development it is restricted by the self financing cap (or limit) on the amount of HRA borrowing permissible for capital investment by each local authority. This limit is currently set at £156.8m for Brighton & Hove and the outstanding debt reaches its peak in 2023/24 where the borrowing level is £147.4m leaving headroom of only £9.4m.

In addition to the debt cap, the reduction in rental income of 1% per annum will also restrict resources available for new build and regeneration so alternative options and delivery mechanisms for funding outside the HRA will be required alongside a review of priorities included in the financial plan.

There are also a number of uncertainties due to impending government legislation which may significantly impact on the long term health of the financial plan such as:

- Housing & Planning Bill – requirement to sell off high value homes when they become vacant with the capital receipts pooled by government and redistributed to Housing Associations.
- Welfare Reform – roll out of universal credit, reduction in tax credits, single room rates for under 35's in social housing and benefit cap to £20,000 per annum, all of which will impact on tenants' ability to pay their rent.
- Welfare Reform & Work Bill 2015 – proposal that households earning more than £30,000 per annum will be subject to rents charged at market rate. This may result in an increase in right to buys, greater administration costs and possibly an increase in bad debts. Any additional rental income will not be retained by the council but returned to the Government for redistribution to Housing Associations to fund their RTB discounts.
- Uncertainty of future rent policy after 2019/20.

The 30 year financial plan will be further updated in 2016 to reflect the impact of the changes resulting from government legislation, once the detail is known, and the 2016/17 budget proposals. This will enable a review of future opportunities for additional investment in existing housing stock and building new homes and also how the housing debt could be structured to accommodate these plans or possibilities.

## **Ensuring we maximise the use of our assets**

### **Maximising income from commercial assets**

Commercial assets will be reviewed to ensure that we are investing in assets to maximise the income we receive, whilst supporting local community needs and services.

### **Seniors housing and over 55's blocks**

Our Seniors housing service consulted on an agreed new service offer early in 2015. This strategy aims to support the delivery of this by investing to improve housing quality in the vast majority of schemes. Improvements will need to be supported on a sustainable financial basis by implementing appropriate service charging arrangements. Additionally, some schemes require more discussion to agree future plans and use.

We also have blocks designated for over 55's only, and these will be reviewed against the aspirations of this strategy via the asset plan.

### **Supporting adult social care**

The HRA is committed to supporting the wider needs and emerging demands of the City as set out in the Housing Strategy, as demonstrated through the construction of an extra-care housing scheme at Brooke Mead in the Albion Hill area of the City, and the designated Better Care fund.

### **Innovative housing provision**

We will consider utilising underused assets, such as some car parks or garages, for innovative, short-life housing provision. Modular buildings, with time-limited planning consents will be considered where they support overall strategies for the City.

### **Creating extra resources for re-investment**

We aim to maximise the budgets available for re-investment by ensuring that proposals for the future use of related assets, such as car parking, includes a full financial viability analysis, considers all potential options, and aims to increase income. Capital investment will be supported where there is a robust business case to do so.

In addition, we believe there is scope to create new partnerships and service offers in the future. These will aim to utilise our current expertise and infrastructure to deliver services beyond the Housing managed assets. This could, for example, include joint procurement of services with other housing providers to reduce costs, as well as creating new income streams by offering high quality services to other asset owners and landlords across the city-region through mutually beneficial partnerships.

### **Leasehold buy backs**

The HRA is committed to ensuring that it maximises the potential for adding to its asset base where it makes financial sense to do so. A wider 'buy-back' policy is to be developed and agreed to ensure opportunities are identified and evaluated effectively.

## **Arrangements for Strategy implementation and monitoring**

This strategy covers the period 2016-2020, and will be fully reviewed at the end of that period.

The detailed strategy delivery will be achieved through the Asset Plan, which will include action plans and timetables against all the key policy areas. The Asset Plan will be updated and reviewed annually.

## **Supporting Documents and abbreviations lists**

Housing Strategy (2015)

Brighton & Hove Tenancy Strategy (2013)

HRA Brighton & Hove Tenancy Policy (2014)

The Brighton & Hove (Property) Standard (2014), available at <http://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/content/housing/council-housing/brighton-hove-standard>

**Medium Term**

The Medium Term Financial revenue position provides a cumulative surplus of £98.405m that can be used to support the delivery of the capital programme during this period. When compared to last years MTFs there is a significant reduction in the revenue surplus available due to the 1% reduction in rents, a total reduction of £14.15m over 4 years. However this has been partly mitigated by accumulated efficiency savings identified over the same period totalling of £7.2m (which are £1.260m in 2016/17, £0.569m in 2017/18, £0.369m in 2018/19 and £0.269m in 2019/20).

	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
<b>Expenditure</b>				
Management & Service costs	15,542	15,459	15,345	15,383
Repairs and maintenance	10,604	10,706	10,874	11,146
Other costs	1,138	1,149	1,161	1,176
Borrowing costs	8,363	9,626	7,362	7,238
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>35,647</b>	<b>36,940</b>	<b>34,742</b>	<b>34,943</b>
<b>Income</b>				
Rental Income	50,393	50,545	50,613	49,931
Service Charges (tenants)	3,441	3,510	3,580	3,652
Other Income	5,335	7,635	6,011	6,031
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>59,169</b>	<b>61,690</b>	<b>60,204</b>	<b>59,614</b>
<b>Net Surplus</b>	<b>23,522</b>	<b>24,750</b>	<b>25,462</b>	<b>24,671</b>
Allocated to:				
Direct Revenue Funding	23,522	24,750	24,381	22,092
Reserves	0	0	1,081	2,579

## 30 YEAR FINANCIAL FORECAST

### Introduction

The introduction of self financing provided local authorities with the opportunity to develop longer term planning to improve the management and maintenance of council homes. The government's self financing valuation agreed at April 2012 was based on using the rent restructuring formula with increases set at RPI + ½% + £2 per week and was set at a level to provide a balanced business plan over the next 30 years.

Since then the Government has imposed two changes to the rent calculation which both result in significant reductions in future rental income. From April 2015, government guidance revised annual increases to Consumer Price Index (CPI) + 1%. This change removed the flexibility of social landlords to increase social rents each year by an additional £2 where rents were below target, resulting in lower annual rental increases over the long term. From April 2016, the Welfare Reform and Work Bill 2015/16 proposes that rents should be reduced by 1% per annum for the next 4 years (2016/17 to 2019/20). This proposed reduction in rents by 1% per annum will reduce resources by £14.1m over that four year period with a cumulative reduction in resources of £223m over 30 years when compared to previous business planning assumptions.

The current financial plan projections shown below continue to provide a balanced business plan but there is less opportunity than before for regeneration and new investment within the HRA due to the significant reductions in rental income projections. The current plan projections should also be viewed with caution due to the uncertainties from impending government legislation not yet modelled in the plan, which may significantly impact further on the long term health of the financial plan such as:

- Housing & Planning Bill – This bill includes a requirement to sell off high value homes when they become vacant and pay the capital receipt to government for redistribution. These properties are likely to be those that contribute most financially to the overall surpluses over 30 years. The full details of this scheme are not yet available to inform business planning.
- Welfare Reform & Work Bill 2015 – This bill includes a proposal that households earning more than £30,000 per annum will be subject to rents charged at market rate with the additional income being paid to central government for redistribution to Housing Associations. This may result in an increase in right to buys, greater administration costs and possibly an increase in bad debts. A significant reduction in the number of homes through increased right to buy sales may also include those properties that contribute most financially to the overall surpluses over 30 years.

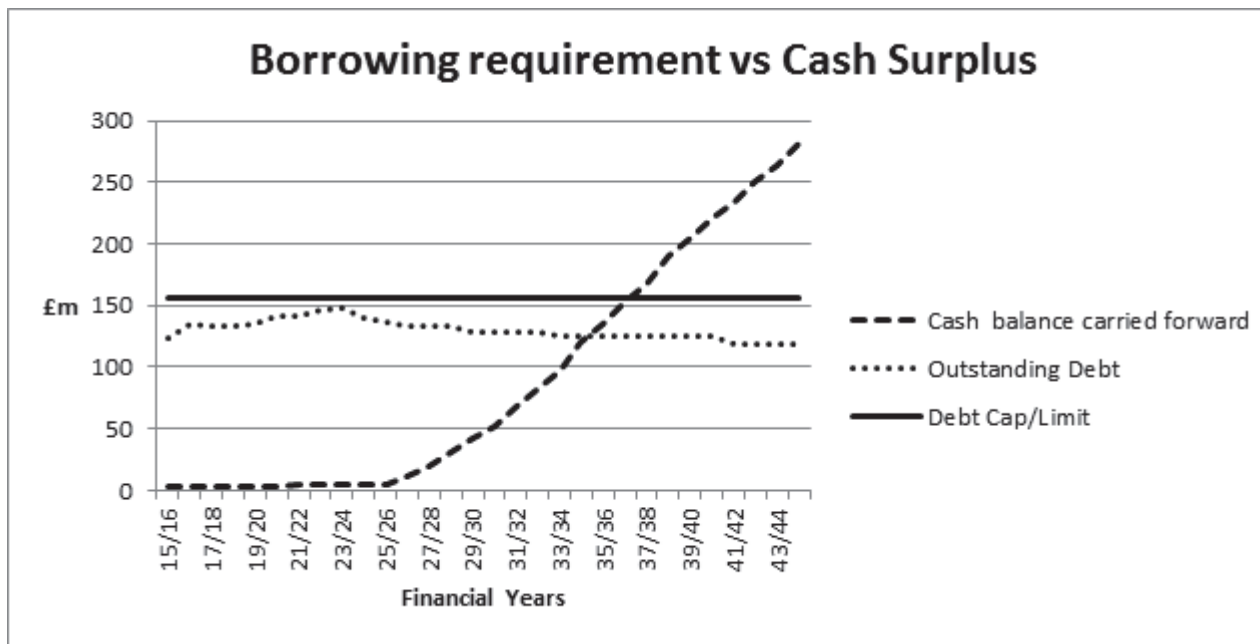


- Welfare Reform – The roll out of universal credit, reduction in tax credits, single room rates for under 35's in social housing and reduction in benefit cap to £20,000 per annum will all impact on tenants ability to pay their rent. The assumptions used for bad debts and voids may need increasing resulting in a loss of projected income.
- Uncertainty of future rent policy after 2019/20. It is not clear at this stage whether the rent policy will revert to the previous policy of increases capped at CPI + 1% or something entirely different.

The 30 year financial plan will continue to be updated to reflect the impact of the changes resulting from government legislation and the 2016/17 budget proposals. This will enable a review of future opportunities for additional investment in existing housing stock and building new homes both within the HRA and through alternative delivery models.

**Forecast** The net position of the financial forecast is shown in the graph below. The cash surplus over the period of the financial plan totals £280.6m. Assuming that no additional borrowing repayments are made over the life of the plan aside from those planned in the current loan schedule, the debt outstanding in year 30 is £119.2m. The cash surpluses equal outstanding debt by year 20 and this provides an indication that in the long term, based on current assumptions, the HRA maintains a balanced position with some surpluses.

Essentially, although the financial forecast shows that the HRA has healthy financial indicators to borrow to source funding for regeneration or development it is restricted by the self financing debt cap (or limit). This is a government restriction on the amount of HRA borrowing permissible for capital investment by each local authority. The cap for Brighton & Hove is £156.8m. The outstanding debt reaches its peak in 2023/24 where the borrowing level is £147.4m leaving headroom of only £9.4m. Therefore, alternative delivery models outside of the constraints of the HRA may need to be considered in the future alongside a review of priorities included in the financial plan.



Note: Cash balance carried forward is net revenue surpluses generated after funding the capital programme.

The 30 year financial forecast has been developed based on the following assumptions:

- A general inflation of CPI assumed as an average of 1.4% for years 2 to 10 and 2% thereafter.
- Revenue repairs and maintenance costs are assumed to increase by 2.5% throughout the plan.
- Right to buy sales are assumed to continue at an average of 40 sales per annum.
- The forecast currently includes approved schemes only, totalling 209 new homes. There is no allowance for any future regeneration schemes or new build schemes.
- The forecast assumes that all stock is fully maintained to the Brighton & Hove Standard with capital investment costs increasing by CPI with a 5% uplift in year 6.
- Rents are assumed to decrease by 1% per annum for the next four years and then revert to the previous policy of increases capped at CPI plus 1%. The CPI assumptions used provides total inflationary increases of an average of 2.6% for years 5-10 and 3% per annum for years 11-30.

The following table provides a summary of the 30 year income and expenditure flows.

<b>30 Year Forecast</b>	<b>Years 1 -5 £'000</b>	<b>Years 6-10 £'000</b>	<b>Years 11-20 £'000</b>	<b>Years 21 -30 £'000</b>	<b>Total £'000</b>
<b>Revenue expenditure:</b>					
Management costs	57,454	58,809	132,678	155,859	404,800
Service costs	17,047	19,133	47,559	63,487	147,226
Repairs and maintenance	55,228	63,281	149,168	185,205	452,882
Other costs	5,844	6,186	14,343	17,484	43,857
Bad debt provision	1,955	1,991	4,273	4,638	12,857
Capital repayments	41,360	54,335	76,597	62,070	234,362
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>178,888</b>	<b>203,735</b>	<b>424,618</b>	<b>488,743</b>	<b>1,295,984</b>
<b>Revenue income:</b>					
Rental income (net of voids)	252,347	265,374	644,311	834,224	1,996,256
Service charges	17,047	19,133	47,559	63,487	147,226
Other income	16,472	17,093	38,905	47,424	119,894
Leaseholder income	14,365	11,633	11,447	15,172	52,617
<b>Total income</b>	<b>300,231</b>	<b>313,233</b>	<b>742,222</b>	<b>960,308</b>	<b>2,315,993</b>
<b>Net revenue income</b>	<b>121,343</b>	<b>109,498</b>	<b>317,603</b>	<b>471,565</b>	<b>1,020,009</b>
<b>Capital expenditure</b>					
Capital investment	131,636	135,093	203,477	309,982	780,188
New build schemes	47,605	0	0	0	47,605
<b>Total capital expenditure</b>	<b>179,241</b>	<b>135,093</b>	<b>203,477</b>	<b>309,982</b>	<b>827,793</b>
<b>Capital funding</b>					
Other capital income	27,065	0	0	0	27,065
Borrowing	31,022	27,336	0	0	58,358
Revenue contribution to capital	121,343	109,499	317,603	471,565	1,020,010
<b>Total funding</b>	<b>179,430</b>	<b>136,835</b>	<b>317,603</b>	<b>471,565</b>	<b>1,105,433</b>
Opening HRA reserves	3,000	0	0	0	3,000
<b>Cash surplus at year 30</b>	<b>3,189</b>	<b>1,742</b>	<b>114,126</b>	<b>161,583</b>	<b>280,640</b>





# Asset Management Strategy Briefing

for Area Panels  
Jan/Feb 2016

John Currell, Housing Asset Manager

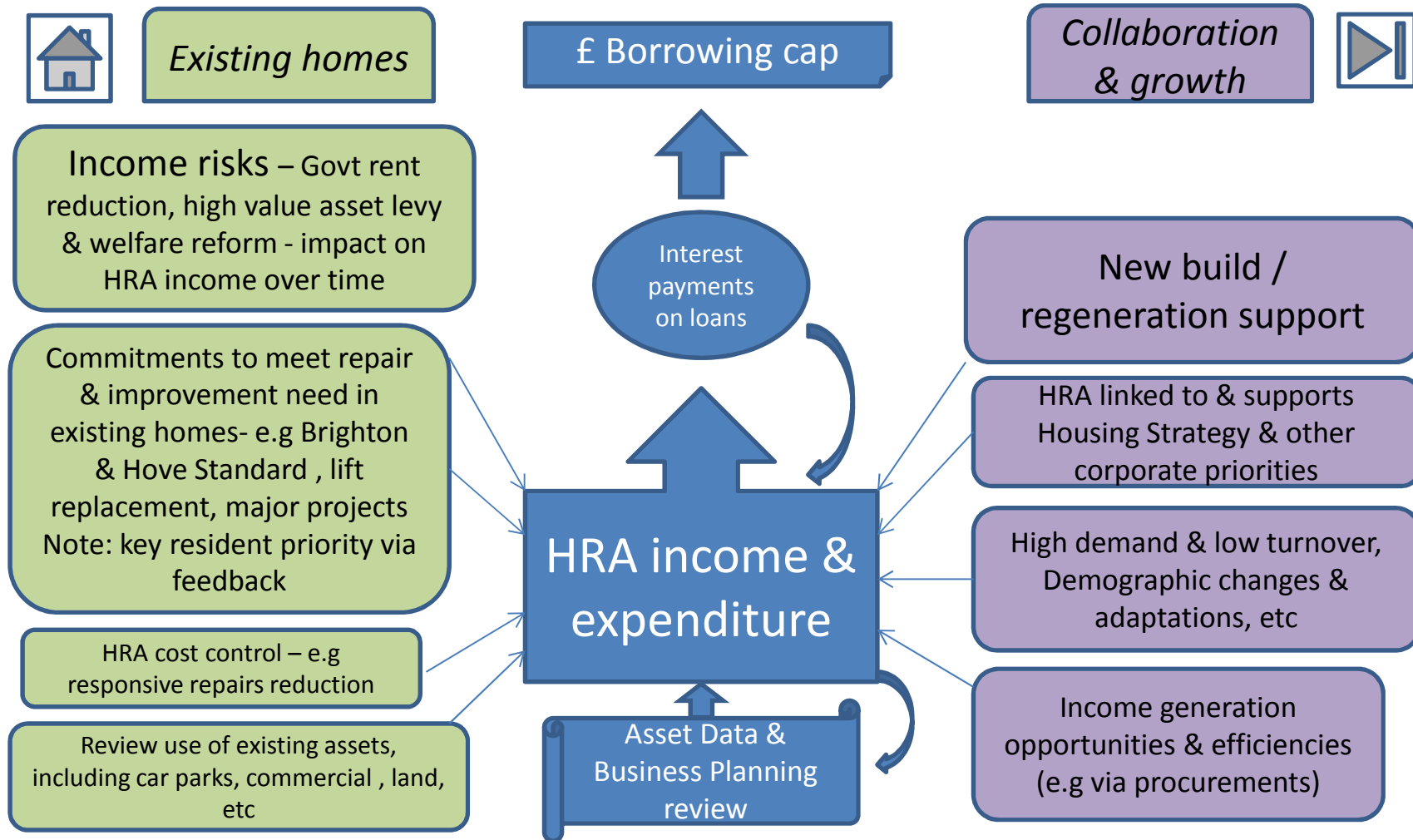
[john.currell@brighton-hove.gov.uk](mailto:john.currell@brighton-hove.gov.uk)

# The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Assets – Stats/Background

- HRA own and manage 11,600 dwellings, and around 3,000 leasehold, plus other assets/land (car parks, commercial etc)
- 1,800 high rise flats & 4,400 houses/bungalows
- Specialist seniors housing (around 850 units)
- non-traditional type homes (around 300 houses) & other block types
- Ageing stock – 75% of the stock built before 1970, including 2,600 built pre 1945. Size of units – 36% studio/1-beds & 38% 2-beds
- Some issues linked to the stock profile include:
- Suitability & future demand, older style design & how to meet modern needs (e.g kitchens, adaptations)  
,demographics , repair costs
- Health – heating / mould growth & energy efficiency



# HRA Asset Management Strategy – current considerations



# Asset Management Strategy & resources available

The Asset management Strategy aims to strike the optimum balance between investing in existing stock and creating new homes.

The HRA Asset Management Strategy is the key to ensuring that we align our assets with the current and future needs of residents, through continuous community engagement and partnerships.

It aligns directly with the City's Housing Strategy 2015

3 key priority objectives of the draft Asset Management Strategy are:

- **Investing in our homes and neighbourhoods to provide safe, good quality housing and support services**
- **Supporting new housing supply**
- **Ensuring financial viability**

All of these priorities are underpinned by, and will continuously support, our agreed Tenancy Strategy Commitments

The 30-year business plan and Asset Management Strategy are aligned to ensure that the resources available for investment are maximised. This approach is helping ensure that the Capital Investment Programme continues to deliver improved Housing Quality.

Asset Management Strategy is expected to be discussed at Housing & New Homes Committee in March.

## Area Panels: January and February 2016

### Summary: Housing Management Performance Report Quarter 3 2015/16

#### Background

The Housing Management Performance Report covers Quarter 3 of the financial year 2015/16. Due to the close timing of the end of the quarter to when papers are dispatched to Area Panel representatives, we are unable to bring the full performance report to Area Panels in January and February. However, information is currently available for this summary report for the Area Panels to note and comment on.

To ensure the timely reporting of performance information we would like to take the full report to Housing & New Homes Committee in March. We hope this will be acceptable to the Area Panels and if representatives would like a copy of the full report once it is available this can be provided.

#### Rent collection and current arrears

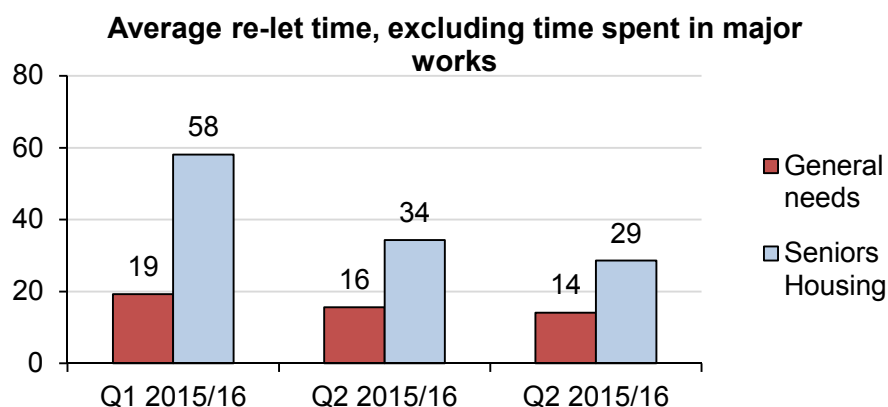
- Overall current tenant arrears have fallen by a quarter since December 2014
- Arrears of under occupying tenants at £88k (11% of overall arrears)

#### Customer services and complaints

- 94% of direct dial calls answered by Housing Customer Services Team
- 35 formal complaints dealt with (at Stage 1)

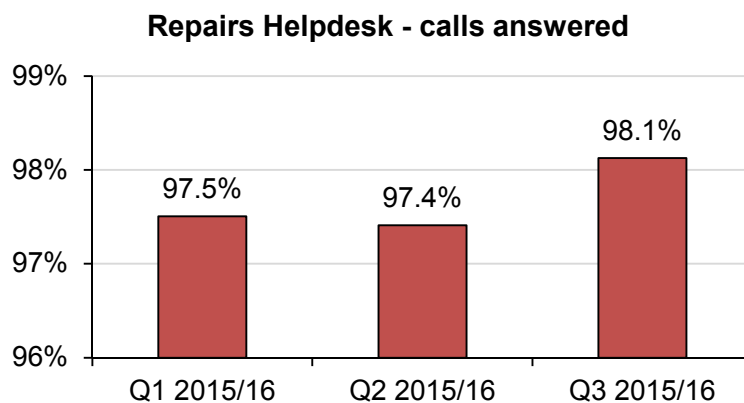
#### Empty home turnaround time

- 134 homes let, of which 112 general needs and 22 Seniors Housing
- 16 calendar days taken to re-let a home, excluding time spent in major works
- Re-let times have decreased for both general needs (14 days) and Seniors Housing (29 days)



## Property & Investment

- 8,054 repairs completed
- 96% of appointments kept by contractor
- 98% of calls to repairs helpdesk answered
- Longest wait time of 4 min 23 sec



## Estates Service

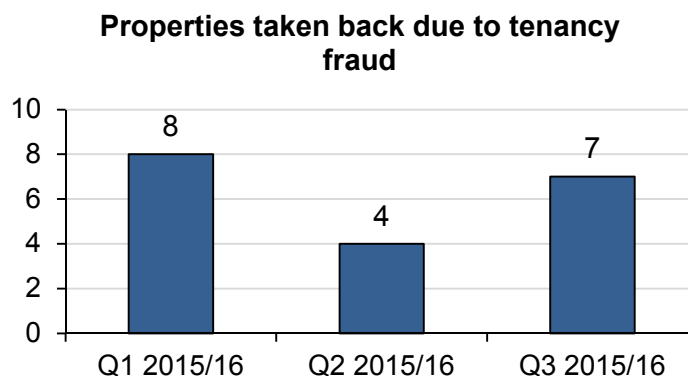
- 99% cleaning quality inspections pass rate
- 100% Neighbourhood Reponse Team quality inspections pass rate

## Anti-social behaviour (ASB)

- 62 cases closed, of which five resulted in tenancy legal action
- 100% success rate for closed Tenancy Sustainment Officer cases

## Tenancy fraud

- 33 cases closed
- Seven properties taken back
- 89 open cases under investigation as of end December 2015.



# **Area Panels: January and February 2016**

## **Briefing Paper: Resident Involvement Review**

### **Background**

Brighton & Hove City Council has a long history of working collaboratively with residents to shape housing services. The Everyone Counts review of resident involvement was undertaken with residents and agreed by Housing Committee in 2012. Its aim was to modernise and widen resident involvement enabling residents to get involved in ways that they prefer, while strengthening the more formal resident involvement framework. This upcoming review will work with residents to build on Everyone Counts, evaluating the action plan and identifying where improvements can be made.

In addition, the council's corporate plan makes it clear that the council needs to 'aim much higher than trying to remain the same' while making sure services are 'right and fit for modern, digital expectations..... accessible when and how people want them' and at a time when budgets are reducing.

As residents will be aware, there are significant budgets pressures on the whole council and as part of the council's budget review process, housing is required to deliver efficiencies, which will include a value for money review of the Tenant Involvement structure over the next two financial years. (Required, as part of the budget setting currently being considered).

### **Regulatory requirements**

Current regulatory requirements state that the council is required to adopt a co-regulatory approach in the delivery of housing services where it, the regulator and tenants together set, monitor and ensure standards are met.

The aim of resident involvement is to enable residents to influence housing services and policy, to improve customer satisfaction, broaden engagement, and for the council to be accountable and transparent as a landlord.

### **Time for a review?**

As outlined at the citywide conference in December 2015, the housing service will be undertaking a review of resident involvement, in 2016 to meet the twin challenges of delivering efficiencies and improved services.

The core outcomes for the review will be to

- Broaden tenant engagement
- Increase tenant satisfaction with the landlord service

- Ensure the tenant involvement framework and leaseholder consultation achieves value for money for tenants receiving housing landlord services and the council

### **Who will be involved in the review?**

The Resident Involvement Team will work with residents through ‘task and finish groups’, on line surveys and workshops. This will lead to a report for Area Panels and the Housing & New Homes Committee later this year.

Residents who are interested in taking part in this review are asked to contact the Resident Involvement Team on 01273 292112, or email [RIT@brighton-hove.gov.uk](mailto:RIT@brighton-hove.gov.uk) In order to involve a broad spectrum of residents the database of residents who want to give feedback (currently 1,630 people) will also be used to get the views of people who don’t usually come to meetings.

### **Scope of Resident Involvement Review**

The review will be comprehensive and cover all aspects of Resident Involvement, including:

- Tenant and leaseholder involvement structures
- Methods of communications for the future
- Benchmarking, best practice and value for money
- Delivering against required outcomes

### **What next?**

An update will be brought to the Area Panels in June.

In the meantime Housing will get the work with residents underway and organise focus groups to plan the shape and scope of the review, making sure it captures those areas of key interest to residents.

**Contact:** Becky Purnell, Resident Involvement Manager  
Telephone: 01273 293022  
Email: [becky.purnell@brighton-hove.gov.uk](mailto:becky.purnell@brighton-hove.gov.uk)

# New homes for neighbourhoods Update



January 2016

Brighton & Hove City Council's New Homes for Neighbourhoods programme is building much needed new council homes on council owned land. We work with local resident associations and ward councillors to improve council estates and neighbourhoods, while making best use of council housing land and buildings to help meet the city's housing needs. We are aiming to build at least 500 new council homes across Brighton, Hove and Portslade.

Nine new council homes are due to be completed in March, adding to the two completed last summer. Over 200 more are currently on site or in the pipeline, with more completions due this summer.

## Former Manor Place office – 15 new flats at Robert Lodge



North side of the new Robert Lodge South block, facing the communal gardens

Applicants have been bidding through Homemove to rent the nine one bedroom flats being completed in the new Robert Lodge South block. The new block, which includes a lift and a wheelchair adapted flat, should be ready for residents to move into in early March.



South side of the new Robert Lodge South block

Transferring tenants releasing larger accommodation will get priority for the Mobility 2 and 3 flats, so that more people on the housing register will get the chance to move to a home that meets their current needs.

Work will start to build the new northern block of six flats facing Manor Way in March.

## 12 new family houses in Hangleton and Portslade



Work is well advanced on building four new 3 bedroom houses on the former garage site at Hardwick Road in Hangleton, which will be ready for letting by the summer. They will be known as 1 to 4 Aldwick Mews and one is designed especially for a household with a wheelchair user.

In Portslade, the timber frames are going up for four new houses being built on two former garage sites at Flint Close. And construction of another four 3 bedroom houses at Foredown Road former garage site will start as soon as tree protection measures have been agreed. This new development will be called Pierre Close, after the founder of the Emmaus charity which has a project nearby.

## Brooke Mead – 45 extra care flats



The concrete foundations and frame for the new extra care scheme at Brooke Mead are now starting to appear out of the ground. The 45 one bedroom flats with community facilities should be ready by summer 2017.

Albion Hill Residents Association and local residents had their say on landscaping plans for the new block at a workshop in December. Another workshop in February will consult local residents on a proposed new community garden next to the site.



## **Ardingly Street car parking site – 5 new homes in Kemp Town**



Funky graffiti art is brightening up the site of the five new council homes being built in Ardingly Street near Ardingly Court and St. James's House.

Behind the scenes, builders have filled in an old air raid shelter they uncovered, diverted the sewer and other services and are nearing completion of the concrete frame. All is on track to be completed this summer and the new block will be called Darwell Court.

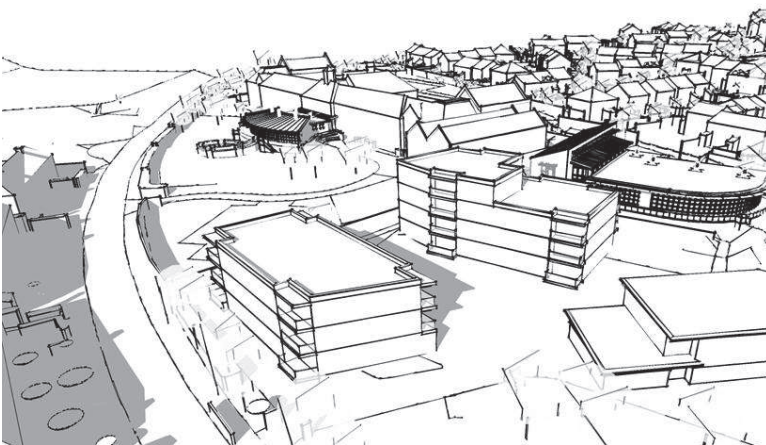
## **Findon Road, Whitehawk – 57 new flats on former library site**



The site of the former Whitehawk library is being prepared to start work on building 57 new council flats in February.

The two blocks will be named Kite Place East and West, following the birds of prey theme. We expect them to be completed in autumn 2017.

## **Wellsbourne site, Whitehawk – latest designs for 29 new flats**



Local residents have been invited to give us their views on plans for 29 new homes on the Wellsbourne site on Whitehawk Road, on 9th February from 3 - 6pm.

The drop in event is being held with Due East Neighbourhood Council at the Whitehawk Library in the Whitehawk Hub, next to the site for the new homes.

There will be another Planning for Real model of the area and the proposed two new blocks, so residents can comment on the latest designs and pass on their views on how the area could be improved to Due East Neighbourhood Council.

## Former Selsfield Drive Housing Office

Bates Estate and other local residents will be invited to meet the architect and give their views on plans for a new block of flats on this site at a drop in consultation on Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> February from 11am to 3pm at Moulsecoomb Hall. Bates Estate Residents Association are working closely with the Estate Regeneration Team to publicise the consultation event.



### How are the rents set for the new homes?

Rents for the new homes are 'affordable rents' set at the Local Housing Allowance rates of Housing Benefit. These help to pay for the cost of developing the new homes. Although they are higher than rents for existing council homes, they will stay within the Local Housing Allowance Housing Benefit limits. And rents for the new homes include all service charges, apart from heating and hot water where the council provides these to residents from a communal boiler.

Although rents for new developments are higher than those for older council homes, the new homes are very energy efficient and newly finished to high standards.

## RIBA Design Competition for small sites

Architects whose designs were preferred for the Royal Institute of British Architects design completion sites at Hinton Close, Rotherfield Crescent, Natal Road and Frederick Street, Brighton are now responding to the panel's feedback and refining their initial designs. The winners will be announced in March.

### For more information

You can see our short film and more information about the New Homes for Neighbourhoods programme at [www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/nhfn](http://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/nhfn), including regular updates on individual schemes and links to planning documents.

You can contact the Estate Regeneration Team by:

Email: [estate.regeneration@brighton-hove.gov.uk](mailto:estate.regeneration@brighton-hove.gov.uk)

Phone: 01273 290591

Post: Estate Regeneration Team, Brighton & Hove City Council, Room 506, Kings House, Grand Avenue, Hove BN3 2SR

## **Minutes of the Senior Housing (Independent Community Living) Action Group Meeting**

Held on Wednesday 9 September 2015 10.00am-12.30pm  
Leach Court, Park Street, Brighton.

**Present:** Roy Crowhurst (Chair), Paul Agius (Evelyn Court, West), Joyce Bean (Elwyn Jones Court, North), Peter Bentley (Lindfield Court, North), Tony Brown (Evelyn Court, West), Allan Davies (Rosehill Court, Central) Jean Davis (Leach Court, Central), Kath Davis (Broadfields, North), Peter Lloyd (Health Watch), Tomm Nyhuus (Somerset Point, Central), Charles Penrose (Sloane Court, Central) , Walter Sargison (Broadfields, North), Elizabeth Tinkler (Laburnum Grove, North), Colin Vincent ( Vice-Chair, Brighton and Hove Older People’s Council).

**Observers:** Ernie Tidy (Churchill House, West)

**Officers:** Chantel Cooper (Resident Involvement Assistant – Minute Taker) (RIA), Rebecca Mann – ‘Becca’ (Resident Involvement Officer) (RIO) (covering for RIO, Hannah Barker), Peter Huntbach (Older Persons Housing Manager, BHCC).

**Councillors:** Councillor Tracey Hill (Deputy to the Chair for Housing and New Homes For Neighbourhoods Committee)

**Apologies:** Councillor Anne Meadows (Chair for Housing and New Homes For Neighbourhoods Committee), Rachel Chasseaud ( Head of Tenancy Services), Ray Goble (Elwyn Jones Court, North).

### **1. Welcome and introductions**

1.1 Chair introduced Cllr Hill, newly elected in May who was attending this meeting for the first time.

1.2 Everyone introduced themselves round the table for Cllr Hill’s benefit.

### **2. Minutes of the last meeting and matters arising**

2.1 (p2 point 3.2) Update regarding Evelyn Court’s sprinkler system: finished yesterday.

2.2

2.2.1 (p2 point 3.4.4) Regarding Tomm Nyhuus’ issue about Mears’ sub-contractors – Tomm has now finally had a response to his letter giving specific examples from Ian Stone, Mears. The matter is being dealt with via the Core Group. Tomm gave Chantel Cooper copies of his letter to Ian Stone and Ian Stone’s response to copy and distribute to the group for their reference, and to pass to Hannah Barker.

**Action:** Chantel Cooper to copy Tomm’s letter and Ian Stone’s response and distribute to the group (which she will do with the papers for the next meeting on 11 November).

2.2.2 Peter Huntbach (Peter H): There is guidance as to how residents should expect contractors to behave in our Repairs Handbook – can send copies of this to the group if required.

Charles Penrose: Clarified that Tomm's point was about *Mears'* relations with *their* contractors, *not* contractors' relations with residents. Also clarified that Mears' contractors tend to immediately sub-contract a job out (to a cheaper sub-contractor) - this is where the chain of communication begins to breakdown, as a job becomes more and more devolved.

- 2.2.3 Peter H: Suggested someone from the Property and Investment team (P and I) should come to a meeting of the Seniors Housing Action Group (S.H.A.G.) to discuss the qualities of jobs done by contractors and sub-contractors, making contractors and sub-contractors accountable and ensuring that they provide value for money.

P and I also have information regarding capital works e.g. lifts and boilers so, if they were to come to a meeting, several birds could be killed with one stone.

**Action:** Chair to invite someone from the Property and Investment team, as well as a representative from Mears to the next meeting.

- 2.2.4 Charles: There are supposed to be site meetings with Mears, contractors and sub-contractors – whoever is doing the job.

Tomm: Raised this Ian Stone in his letter, who responded as follows: for all major works projects there is to be a pre-commencement meeting, a meet the contractor meeting, monthly meetings with minutes produced and coffee mornings etc. For planned works Mears will produce newsletters advising residents and Scheme Managers of said works in advance and for responsive communal repairs, which cannot be predicted and notified in advance, Mears will liaise with the Scheme Manager concerned.

- 2.3 (p3 3.6.2) Peter H distributed copies of the studio flat conversion timetable to the group. A leaflet has also been produced regarding the programme which has gone out with letters to Jasmine Court etc.

- 2.4 (p11 point 10.51) Tony reiterated his question about boilers at Evelyn House.

A – Peter Huntbach (Peter H) Has no further information – there are no immediate plans to do the boilers at Evelyn House under Decent Homes.

Peter H clarified that there are no plans to do the boilers in tandem with the studio flat conversion programme at Evelyn Court. Could find out when this job is going to be done under a capital works programme.

**Action:** Peter Huntbach to chase the Policy Team regarding this matter (the boilers at Evelyn House).

- 2.5 Tony: Observed that there was no rep from Mears at this meeting as had been requested as a previous Seniors Housing Action Meeting.

A – Peter H: This is because today's meeting is an Annual General Meeting (AGM). Arrangements are being made for a representative from Mears to attend

the next meeting on 11 November.

- 2.6 (p11 point 10.6.1) Colin Vincent: Follow-up on the closure of Goodwood Court Surgery. The Older People's Council (OPC) has had two meetings with representatives from the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) as to how overnight closures like this can be avoided in future and more notice given – this may involve changes to General Practitioner (GP) contracts.

**Minutes** – agreed as an accurate record.

### **3. Minutes of the last AGM ( 10 September 2014) and matters arising**

- 3.1 No comments made.

**Minutes** – agreed as an accurate record.

### **4. Chair's Communications**

- 4.1 Chair (Roy Crowhurst) is putting an article in October's *Homing In* to encourage gay men to move into Seniors Housing.
- 4.2 The Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transexual (LGBT) Switchboard has a meeting on 18 September – is looking at producing a 'watermark', to recognise those organisations etc which have gone the extra mile for the LGBT community.

### **5. Update from Peter on Policy**

- 5.1 Further to p4 point 4.2 of the previous minutes, Seniors Housing staff received LGBT awareness training last month from LGBT switchboard and the Stonewall Housing Association. Another session is booked for next month.
- 5.2 Studio flat conversion programme is underway as the group is aware.
- 5.3 Took a paper on re-modelling communal areas to the Housing Leadership Team.
- 5.4 Staff
- 5.4.1 The last Scheme Manager to be recruited is due to start on Monday (14 September, 2015). This brings the service up to full strength.
- 5.4.2 There is one agency Scheme Manager still on site who may be retained to cover a Scheme Manager who is on long term sick leave.
- 5.4.3 Comments and Queries

Tony: It is his scheme, Evelyn Court which has the agency Scheme Manager. Residents appreciate she has to do other things e.g. provide cover at Muriel House on a Friday (which she in turn is covered for) but, if staffing levels are up to full strength, she should be at Evelyn Court full-time.

A – Peter H: We are not quite there yet – staff are now in place but some still need to be inducted , which is why this is happening. Once these staff are

inducted, it should be one Scheme Manager per scheme.

## 5.5 Lettings Revision Focus Group

Peter H: Is pleased that Roy Crowhurst, Bob Spacie and Charles Penrose met with Satti Sidhu, Performance and Improvement Officer regarding revising lettings. Good suggestions were made about communications and welcome packs. Properties which had remained un-let for a long period of time have now been let – as a result of reviewed eligibility and ‘preventative work’ – i.e. placing those with an urgent housing need in these properties rather than in expensive temporary accommodation.

## 5.6 Has reduced the burden of administration on Scheme Managers e.g. condensed three forms into one to free them up so they can ‘be more visible’ within their schemes.

Peter H has told his Scheme Managers at team meetings to ‘be more visible’ within their schemes and to attend more activities.

Elizabeth Tinkler : Her scheme exemplifies this – her Scheme Manager, Greg meets with them and attends coffee mornings. Bridget went on a social.

Charles: Requested that a Scheme Manager should attend the S.H.A.G.

Peter H: Yes, they will, especially the new ones.

## 5.7 Finances

5.7.1 Peter H spoke about the financial implications of the council’s projected £8m overspend at the end of the current financial year. This affects budgets on three levels: the council’s budget, Housing’s budget and the Seniors Housing service’s budget.

5.7.2 In terms of the council’s budget as a whole, new, stricter guidelines regarding the authorisation of expenditure, purchase orders and the payment of invoices have been brought in.

5.7.3 Spending is being concentrated on essentials only, not the discretionary.

5.7.4 This has implications where the Seniors Housing service’s budget is concerned. Repairs will be funded, yes but the biggest impact where Seniors Housing is concerned will be the Guest Room Bids budget because this is a discretionary budget.

5.7.5 A concern was raised about what this means in terms of staffing within the schemes.

A – Peter H: Reassured the group that the Seniors Housing service has the money for its staff – staff are funded via service charges.

Controls have been put in place however, where the council as a whole is concerned – there is a recruitment freeze across the council *except* where resident health and safety is concerned.

5.7.6 Peter H is meeting with the Finance Manager today to discuss the implications of the budget constraints for the Seniors Housing service.

5.7.7 Peter H: The Seniors Housing service has always had an annual budget of £2.8M. Is currently projecting an overspend of £23k – this is due to the holding back of some properties because of the conversion programme.

Moreover, the government has announced a rent reduction of one percent year on year for four years –so less money will be coming in at a time when demand is increasing.

5.7.8 Cllr. Hill: Clarified that this projected overspend is occurring because of a massive increase in demand of adult social care and child social care – which is resource intense and an area where we have a duty of care – and not because of how funds have been managed. For example, the council is having to use private sector housing (which is expensive) to meet temporary housing needs.

Peter H: Reiterated that preventative care like this saves more money in the long-term.

5.8 Comments and Queries

Q – Colin: Is there an update on Brookmead?

A – Peter H: It's being built and is due to be completed in May, 2017. It is a 40 unit extra care scheme with a focus on dementia, funded by the government and going to be run jointly by the Seniors Housing Service and Adult Social Care.

## **6. Proposal to change this meeting's timeslot by Councillor Meadows**

6.1 In Resident Involvement Officer (RIO) Hannah Barker's absence Chantel clarified why Cllr. Meadows was requesting this change: Cllr. Meadows is the Chair of the Moulsecoomb Local Action Team (MLAT) which meets on the second Wednesday of every month in the same time slot S.H.A.G meetings occupy, so if the S.H.A.G continues to meet on the second Wednesday of every other month in the same time-slot, Cllr Meadows the Chair for Housing and New Homes For Neighbourhoods Committee will never be able to attend a meeting of the S.H.A.G. She therefore requests that the S.H.A.G change their meeting slot – to the first or third Wednesday of that alternative month (it can't be the fourth Wednesday because this is when the Estate Development Budget Panel meets) or to the afternoon...

6.2 Round the table discussion raised the following points:

6.2.1 Can MLAT move instead?

Charles: Yes, this meeting has occupied the same time slot for 23 years, since its inception. The LATs have only been around for two years. Therefore MLAT should change its date/meeting slot.

A – Becca: This isn't so easy. A Local Action Team (LAT) meeting involves the coming together of a number of different agencies e.g. the Police etc and trying to get a date and time when a representative from all these agencies can attend is a nightmare so, like the S.H.A.G., they have a set time slot they can put in their diaries in advance.

6.2.2 Couldn't someone else chair the LAT every other month?

6.2.3 Allan Davies: This issue (changing the date/time-slot of S.H.A.G. meetings) came up a few years ago- S.H.A.G meetings clashed with a council officer's other duties. The council officer concerned sent a proxy. Could Cllr Meadows send a proxy?

6.2.4

Cllr. Hill: Remember, S.H.A.G. is new to Cllr. Meadows, whereas MLAT is a prior engagement as far as Cllr. Meadows is concerned. Moreover, as well as performing her duties as the Chair for Housing and New Homes For Neighbourhoods Committee, Cllr. Meadows is keen to remain a dedicated ward councillor.

She (Cllr. Hill) is the Deputy to Cllr. Meadows' Chair for Housing and New Homes For Neighbourhoods Committee and has come to S.H.A.G today in her capacity of Deputy. However, Cllr. Meadows is 'better connected' than herself and would therefore be 'better value for money'. Moreover, she (Cllr. Hill) works so will not always be able to attend a meeting. Asked the group whether they had other commitments which tied it to this particular time/date slot or whether it was just a matter of precedent. If the group could be flexible and accommodate Cllr. Meadows' request to change the time/date of S.H.A.G meetings, it would be better off with her.

Chair: Yes, we do have other commitments. The year's S.H.A.G. dates are a given in his diary so he doesn't double-book himself.

6.2.5 Charles: Made a point that S.H.A.G. is a *city-wide* group *not* a local one. We tenant reps have local meetings too but can't change our diaries.

6.2.6 Group **voted** on the proposal. Vote was unanimous – not to change the current date/time-slot of S.H.A.G.

## 7. **Guest Room Bids**

7.1 There were no new guest room bids – Leach Court's bid for a single divan bed (quoted at £300) was dealt with as a latecomer at the previous meeting.

7.2

7.2.1 Tony: There should be another guestroom bid – for a set of bedding for a single bed for Evelyn Court. Submitted it a fortnight ago.



- 7.2.2 Chantel: Jayne Halls, the Administration Officer for the Seniors Housing team hasn't sent any other guest room bids through to her.
- 7.2.3 Peter H: Reiterated that any non-essential expenditure cannot be authorised at this time, can only authorise if needs replacing due to breakage, spoiling or being worn out.
- 7.2.4 Tony: This is to replace spoiled bedding.
- 7.2.5 **Action:** Tony Brown to ask Jayne Halls about this bid for bedding for Evelyn Court (as directed to do so by Peter H).

### Interval

#### 8. Elections

- 8.1 Roy Crowhurst, current chair of the S.H.A.G. thanked Chantel, the minute-taker, the tea-ladies, Hannah and Peter H for their efforts over the last year and stepped down.
- 8.2 Becca Mann: Thanked, Roy for all his work on behalf of the S.H.A.G over the last year.

#### 8.3 S.H.A.G. AGM Election Results 9 September 2015

Position	Nominee (s)	Elected
Chair	Roy Crowhurst	Roy Crowhurst
Vice-Chair	Charles Penrose	Charles Penrose
North Area Representative	Kath Davis	Kath Davis
East Area Representative	None	None
Central Area Representative	Jean Davis	Jean Davis
West Area Representative	Tony Brown	Tony Brown
Home Service Improvement Group Representative	Tomm Nyhuus	Tomm Nyhuus
Home Service Improvement Group Deputy	<i>Tony Brown t.b.c.*</i>	<i>Tony Brown t.b.c.*</i>
Neighbourhood & Community Service Improvement Group Representative	Jean Davis	Jean Davis
Neighbourhood	None	None

<b>&amp; Community Service Improvement Group Deputy</b>		
<b>Tenancy Service Improvement Group Representative</b>	<i>Tony Brown t.b.c.*</i>	<i>Tony Brown t.b.c.*</i>
<b>Tenancy Service Improvement Group Deputy</b>	None	None
<b>Involvement &amp; Empowerment Service Improvement Group Representative</b>	None	None
<b>Involvement &amp; Empowerment Service Improvement Deputy</b>	None	None
<b>Business &amp; Value for Money Service Improvement Representative</b>	None	None
<b>Business &amp; Value for Money Service Improvement Deputy</b>	None	None

In each case the vote was unanimous.

(\* **Post Meeting Update:** Unfortunately, due to an oversight, Tony Brown has been elected as both a dep for the Home SIG *and* as a rep on Tenancy SIG – and, of course, the rules are that he can't be on both these groups, so he will have to choose between them. He is aware of this and will be sampling a meeting of the Tenancy SIG on 4<sup>th</sup> November, having previously been a member of the Home SIG, after which he will make his choice).

- 8.4 Roy Crowhurst thanked the group for re-electing him as its chair. Encouraged group members to come to him if they have something which they would like to put on the agenda for a meeting and to make their respective Tenants' Associations aware that anyone resident in Seniors' Housing is welcome to

attend a meeting of the S.H.A.G.

## 9. Round Robin

9.1 Tomm: Peter H needs a new job title – ‘Older Persons Housing Manager ‘ his current job title doesn’t reflect the ‘ethos’ of the reviewed service.

A – Peter H: Yes, this is a good point. There is a debate to be had here.

**Action:** Peter Huntbach to seek advice regarding changing his job title to better reflect the ‘new look’ service and come back to the group.

It was observed that (because of the ‘Scheme Manager’ title) there are too many people with the word ‘manager’ in their job title in the Senior Housing team.

9.2 Walter Sargison:

9.2.1 Regarding the Gardening Competition...

There is a gardening conference on Wednesday 14 October 2015 between 1pm and 3pm here at Leach Court.

There will be a buffet and the Mayor will be presenting prizes between 12.30pm-1pm.

Peter H: It’s good to get people out there growing their own produce, keeping them active and sharing their skills – in keeping with the new ‘ethos’ of Seniors Housing – so he will be promoting the conference.

For example, Lindfield Court has a great vegetable garden and there are amazing things happening in the courtyard of Lavender House.

9.2.2 Still looking for a Secretary and three committee members for the Seniors Housing Gardening Club – has sent a newsletter and a poster out to all the schemes via Resident Involvement Officer, Keely McDonald.

9.3 Jean Davis: Work on the lift (Leach Court) was completed last week – the operatives working on it were fantastic – they even carried residents’ shopping up in the lift. Residents gave a ‘thank-you’ card and threw a ‘thank-you’ party for those concerned.

9.4 Charles: Sloane Court is hosting a shuffleboard tournament on Monday 28 September. Will e-mail Peter H once he has more information so the Scheme Managers can relay the details to their respective schemes.

9.5 Joyce Bean: The residents of Elwyn Jones Court are happy with the re-tarmacing work done in their back garden.

9.6 Ernie Tidy: Further to page 5, point 5.7 of the previous minutes, he thought some of the comments regarding the culture change taking place in seniors housing

amusing.

9.7 Peter H: Clarified that that particular section of the previous minutes was about how Scheme Managers and tenants/residents could work together to promote their scheme to prospective new residents and manage the lettings e.g. by conveying local knowledge about the schemes to prospective new residents.

9.8 Colin:

9.8.1 The OPC has a public meeting on Tuesday 15 September between 10.15am and 1pm at the Jubilee Library.

There will be two presentations, the first on the Fairness Commission and tackling inequality issues in the city by Julia Reddaway from the Policy Team of the Fairness Commission , the second, an update on the implementation of the Care Act, 2015 (which will be phased over two years), by Brian Doughty, Head of Assessment Services.

Colin circulated flyers promoting this to the group.

9.8.2 Thursday 1 October 2015 is 'Older People's Day'. Programme is being drawn up now, in collaboration with Age Concern. Could Peter H's team help distribute the programme when it is ready?

A – Peter H: Yes

9.9 Paul Aguis: Rubbish and recycling at Evelyn Court was last collected three weeks ago.

The bins are overflowing so rubbish is being placed around them in plastic bags (and the binmen don't collect rubbish left *around* the bins, only rubbish in them) – which feral animals and birds e.g. foxes and seagulls are ripping open and strewing the rubbish around. It is becoming a health hazard.

Chair: Woods House is experiencing the same problem. The rubbish and recycling there hasn't been collected for two weeks.

**Action:** Peter Huntbach will take the matter of uncollected rubbish and recycling at Evelyn Court and Woods House up with City Clean and feed-back to the Scheme Managers and the S.H.A.G.

**10. Next meeting will be held on Wednesday 11 November 2015, 10am-12.30pm at Leach Court, Park Street, Brighton.**

### **Tenancy Service Improvement Group 4 November 2015**

- Reviewed the succession letters- copies sent to non-attendees
- Agreed to look at conflict coaching and mediation
- Looking at fixed penalty notices for ASB
- Looking at a day in a life of Tenancy Officer
- Preventing fly tipping and developing respectful communities possible areas of work

### **Home Service Improvement Group 19 November 2015**

- Asset Management Strategy - budget, affordability and report from resident consultation
- Sustainability plan - an overview for Housing stock, including solar panels on tenant's homes.
- Loft & Extension Scheme - Information and the change in criteria.
- Updates on jargon busting resident inspectors and resident action plan
- Elections of new reps to Estates Development Budget panel, Partnership Core Group, chair and vice chair

### **Involvement & Empowerment Service Improvement Group 26 November 2015**

- Planning 2016 calendar of community events to promote Resident Involvement on estates
- Finalising text for new Resident Involvement Handbook
- Residents giving quotes about how being involved has made a difference for handbook, online version, and You Tube video
- Exploring recognition scheme for tenants and leaseholders who make a difference
- Working on updated Tenant & Resident Association manual, including information on setting up informal resident groups

### **Neighbourhood & Community Service Improvement Group 3 December 2015**

- Delighted to welcome guest speaker from the Brighton and Hove Food Partnership
- Watched a video about community gardening and inspired to start one in Hove
- Will be consulting residents on the estate
- Idea to include neighbouring residents as well as the immediate community
- Fairly low cost, brings people together, and provides fresh produce

### **Business & Value for Money Service Improvement Group 7 December 2015**

- Discussed alternative revenue streams for the council
- Agreed to encourage residents to look out for unused properties for possible use
- Discussed value for money of service charges
- Agreed to promote 'Jargon Buster' to residents to help simplify technical information
- Looked at the Council's Performance Report and commented on content